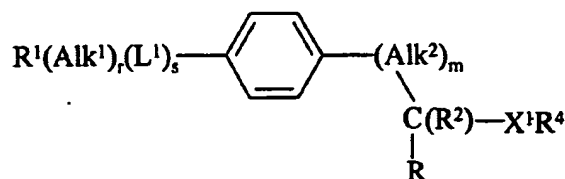


This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A compound of formula (1a):



wherein:

R is a carboxylic acid;

R¹ is an optionally substituted pyridyl group;

Alk¹ is an optionally substituted C₁₋₆ aliphatic chain or an optionally substituted C₄₋₆ heteroaliphatic chain containing one, two, three or four heteroatoms or heteroatom-containing groups chain selected from -L²CH₂-, -CH₂L²CH₂-, -L²(CH₂)₂-, -CH₂L²(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₂L²CH₂-, -L²(CH₂)₃-, and -(CH₂)₂L²(CH₂)₂, where L² is selected from the group consisting of -O-, -S-, -C(O)-, -C(O)O-, -C(S)-, -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, -N(R⁵)-, -CON(R⁵)-, -OC(O)N(R⁵)-, -CSN(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)CO-, -N(R⁵)C(O)O-, -N(R⁵)CS-, -S(O)N(R⁵)-, -S(O)₂N(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)S(O)-, -N(R⁵)S(O)₂-, -N(R⁵)CON(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)CSN(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)SON(R⁵)-, and -N(R⁵)SO₂N(R⁵)-;

R⁵ is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group;

L¹ is -O-, -S-, -C(O)-, -C(O)O-, -C(S)-, -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, -N(R⁵)-, -CON(R⁵)-, -OC(O)N(R⁵)-, -CSN(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)CO-, -N(R⁵)C(O)O-, -N(R⁵)CS-, -S(O)N(R⁵)-, -S(O)₂N(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)S(O)-, -N(R⁵)S(O)₂-, -N(R⁵)CON(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)CSN(R⁵)-, -N(R⁵)SON(R⁵)-, or -N(R⁵)SO₂N(R⁵)-;

r and s, which may be the same or different, is each zero or an integer 1;

Alk² is a straight or branched alkylene chain;

m is zero or an integer 1;

R² is a hydrogen atom or a methyl group;

X¹ is a group selected from -N(R³)CO-, (where R³ is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group); -N(R³)SO₂-, -N(R³)C(O)O- or -N(R³)CON(R^{3a})- (where R^{3a} is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group);

R⁴ is an optionally substituted C₁₋₆aliphatic, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkenyl, C₇₋₁₀bicycloalkyl, C₇₋₁₀tricycloalkyl, C₇₋₁₀bicycloalkenyl, or C₇₋₁₀tricycloalkenyl group;

and the salts, solvates, hydrates ~~and~~ or N-oxides thereof.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (canceled)

5. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein -(Alk¹)_n(L¹)_s- is a -CH₂O- or -CON(R⁵)- group where R⁵ is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group.

6. (original) A compound according to Claim 5 wherein -(Alk¹)_n(L¹)_s- is a -CONH-group.

7. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein Alk² is -CH₂-, m is an integer 1, and R² is a hydrogen atom.

8. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein X^1 is a -NHCO-, -NH SO_2 -, -NHC(O)O- or -NHCONH- group.
9. (original) A compound according to Claim 8 wherein X^1 is a -NHCO- group.
10. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein R^4 is an optionally substituted straight or branched C_{1-6} alkyl group or an optionally substituted C_{3-7} cycloalkyl or C_{7-10} tricycloalkyl group.
11. (original) A compound according to Claim 10 wherein R^4 is an optionally substituted straight or branched C_{1-4} alkyl, cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl or adamantyl group.
12. (currently amended) A compound which is:
N-Isopropaloyl-*N*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;
N-Cyclopropaloyl-*N*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;
N-Acetyl-*N'*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;
and the salts, solvates, hydrates ~~and~~ or N-oxides thereof.
13. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 1 together with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers, excipients or diluents.
14. (canceled)
15. (canceled)
16. (canceled)

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- 17. (canceled)
- 18. (canceled)
- 19. (canceled)